



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 20 April 2018 from 10.02am - 11.12am

Membership

Present

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Brown
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora (minutes 28-31)
Councillor Parry Tsimbirdis
Councillor Jonathan Wheeler

Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Wayne Bowcock - Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Dan Quinn - Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery
Damian West - Group Manager for the South of the County
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

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None.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

27 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2018 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

28 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE

Dan Quinn, Area Manager and Head of Service Delivery, presented the report which updates the Committee on Service Delivery Performance between 1 October and 31 December 2017.

The report includes the activity of the Service with the number and types of incidents responded to and the Retained Duty System (RDS) availability by station.

The following points were highlighted and responses provided to the Committee's questions:

- (a) it should be noted that retained Warsop and East Leake Station staff achieved an exceptionally impressive availability of 97.35% and 96.29% respectively during the last quarter of 2017. The achievement of 80% or more is considered good against some national figures, so even where there has been a decrease in availability on the previous quarter's figures, overall service availability is good. Detailed investigations into the factors behind lower performing stations is carefully considered and efforts made to address the issues behind lower availability;
- (b) for future reports, additional information will be included such as the number of incidents attended by each station. It is noted that although on call 100 hours per week, if only called out three or four times, this can result in as little as £17 per callout, which provides the Committee with a true sense of retained firefighters commitment to their communities;
- (c) on 1 July 2018 there will be a 'Significant Incidence Response' Service exercise which will include a fire in a high rise building. Members of the Authority will be provided with more details;
- (d) with regard to recruitment, the Service does attend jobs/recruitment fairs. More details are provided in a following agenda item but information from respective Councils on their fairs and recruitment events is welcomed;
- (e) in response to the point raised by members that several residents contributing to the East Leake Facebook page had commented and raised concerns that the valued First Responder service is no longer available, this voluntary element has been withdrawn at the suggestion of trades unions pending the outcome of the ongoing negotiations at a national level. East Leake crews took part in the first responder scheme on a voluntary basis which was welcomed by the community due to its remote location and the length of time taken for paramedics and ambulances to arrive. The comments of Councillors and residents will be passed to the East Leake crews, along with the suggestion that if they wish to continue with First Responding on a voluntary basis, from the Services' stance, the option is still available to them. Statistics on responding to incidents and the outcomes are held by East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) but information can be requested to try and gauge, what, if any adverse effects for citizens, including loss of life, can be identified by the service being withdrawn. This information will be circulated to members outside of the meeting.

Members of the Committee commended the high availability rates of Warsop and East Leake Station staff and requested that this is formally reflected in writing to the staff at these stations and each station which achieved an availability of 90% or more. It is understood that there are many factors which may influence availability which is not necessarily a reflection of staff commitment, which is not doubted.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the report;**
- (2) for Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, to forward the Committee's thanks and appreciation to staff at Retained Duty stations which have achieved an availability of 90% or more during the last quarter.**

29 SUSTAINABILITY OF ON-CALL PROJECT

Damian West, Group Manager for the South of the County, presented the Sustainability of On-Call Project report which informs the Committee of the ongoing development work of the project following the 'On-Call Review'.

The Sustainability of On-Call Project engages representatives from the organisation, including representative bodies, and receives ideas and suggestions from every level of the workforce on improving processes and increasing efficiency. This work feeds into that of the national working group (in which Damian participates).

Significant progress has been made in increasing the availability of on-call staff which is now averaging 90%, one of the highest availability rates across the UK.

Information sheets, which can be tailored to local recruitment, highlight the benefits and dispel myths of retained on-call working for the Fire Service. Final versions will be available to all members of the Authority by the end of the month.

Turn-over of retained staff is 10% but there are a variety of reasons why retained staff may leave the Service, including availability and flexibility to undertake training, but also include individual circumstances around home life and substantive employment. It is worth noting that retained staff must live within a set distance of the fire station, which, in itself limits broader recruitment.

Members of the Committee requested further, more detailed information, on the reasons why retained staff left the Service.

Concerted efforts are being made to improve staff retention, including:

- ensuring that staff can maintain a work/life balance;
- revising how training is provided by ensuring it's offered at a variety of times and days to enable it to fit around other, substantive employment,. Development of how training can be undertaken; for example independent e-learning for some subjects;
- increased availability of support staff, including speciality support.

The Service is working collaboratively at a national level and is working closely locally with Lincolnshire (which also has a high on-call rate), Leicestershire and Derbyshire to share good practices.

The success of the Police in increasing Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) and female recruitment will be carefully examined and where appropriate adapted for Fire Service recruitment.

Members of the Committee welcomed the report and offered to ensure that the Service is kept informed of potential events where retained firefighter recruitment may be possible, and requested that the provision of recruitment contact cards be considered to enable Councillors to inform interested constituents. Members also urged the Service to fully participate in recruitment fairs, approach secondary schools and colleges to engage young people in preparation for potential recruitment and ensure that the range of activity undertaken by the Fire Service is understood.

RESOLVED to note the current work being undertaken by the Sustainability of On-Call Group.

30 ARBORETUM: SAFER HOUSES CAMPAIGN

Dan Quinn, Area Manager for Service Delivery, presented the report which informs members of the multi-agency preparation and 'Safer Houses' campaign activity which took place on 14 February 2018 in the Arboretum Ward of Nottingham City.

As one of the most deprived wards in the country, Arboretum has a diverse and significant transient proportion of the community and consistently high rates of crime and antisocial behaviour, including intentional fire setting which averages approximately 250 incidents per year.

Whilst the combined focus of partners provided a range of safety and advice information to approximately 300 properties, partners also knocked on doors to engage residents and small business owners in person. A prevention stand was also sited in the Mary Potter Centre to raise awareness and offer advice.

30 Home Safety Check referrals were made (10 undertaken on the day), 10 small businesses on Bentinck Road and the top of Radford Road were engaged and will receive follow-up activity, and approximately 40 individuals received safety advice at the Mary Potter Centre stand.

The value of face-to-face engagement was evident where residents were not fluent in, or able to read English, but were pleased to engage, including some because of their children translating. Although officers fluent in a range of several languages assisted with the engagements, all emergency service partners have access to a dial-up interpreter service.

It is recognised that the Fire Service is often able to access communities and engage with citizens, where other authorities/services may not be so warmly welcomed. This has proved valuable not only for the preventative work of the Fire Service, but collaboratively by being able to introduce and share partners' information.

In residential tenanted properties, where hazards and regulatory issues are identified by Fire Service staff, but which are outside the remit of the fire service, tenants can be sign-posted to relevant partners or the relevant information passed to regulatory bodies.

The issues within the Arboretum ward are significant and an ongoing focus for the Crime and Drugs Partnership. However, the transient nature of a significant proportion of the community presents challenges which will require the continued, frequent work of partners to improve home and business safety, prevent fires and reduce organised crime.

Whilst there are no firm plans to undertake similar work in other areas of the City and/or County, where the value of such work can be evidenced, as per the Service's 'Community Safety Plan', resources can be allocated to where they will have the most influence.

Members of the Committee commended officers' work and the excellent working relationship and collaboration with partners, and requested that should any further events be scheduled, members of the Committee are informed in advance.

RESOLVED to note the report.

31 NEW CROSS AND BROOMHILL UPDATE

Following the questions raised by Committee Members at the previous meeting, discussions have taken place with the Chief Executive of Ashfield District Council (ADC). It has been confirmed that ADC has re-profiled and restructured the project model and support team for the New Cross and Broomhill Project due to financial commitments from contributing partners changing. As a result, the guaranteed funding available makes the project financially viable for the partners involved.

Considering the previous report, independent evaluation and re-profiling of the project, the Chair of the Community Safety Committee and Opposition Spokesperson are satisfied that the previously proposed contribution of £40,000 to the project will provide value for money to the Service. The funding allocation has been approved and the seconded officer returned to their substantive NFRS post, as per the delegated authority awarded by the Committee at the last meeting.

The business case for the Project will be reviewed in a year's time and annually if further funding is requested from the Service.

RESOLVED to note the delegated decision taken by the Chair and opposition spokesperson to withdraw the secondee and maintain the LPSA reward grant reserve funding to the project, and review the position annually.